



Office of the Attorney General
State of Texas

DAN MORALES
ATTORNEY GENERAL

March 29, 1995

Ms. Raenell Silcox
Resource Protection Division
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
4200 Smith School Road
Austin, Texas 78744

OR95-154

Dear Ms. Silcox:

You ask whether certain information is subject to required public disclosure under the Texas Open Records Act, chapter 552 of the Government Code. Your request was assigned ID# 31016.

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department received an open records request for information that you contend may be withheld from the public pursuant to the Open Records Act, section 552.103(a) of the Government Code. You submitted to this office a representative sample of the requested information.

Section 552.103(a) applies to information:

(1) relating to litigation of a civil or criminal nature or settlement negotiations, to which the state or a political subdivision is or may be a party or to which an officer or employee of the state or a political subdivision, as a consequence of the person's office or employment, is or may be a party; and

(2) that the attorney general or the attorney of the political subdivision has determined should be withheld from public inspection.

To secure the protection of section 552.103(a), a governmental body must demonstrate that requested information "relates" to a pending or reasonably anticipated judicial or quasi-judicial proceeding. Open Records Decision No. 588 (1991). In this instance you have made the requisite showing that the requested information relates to reasonably anticipated litigation for purposes of section 552.103(a). The requested records may therefore be withheld.

We note that if the opposing parties in the anticipated litigation have seen or had access to any of the information in these records, there would be no justification for now withholding that information from the requestor pursuant to section 552.103(a). Open Records Decision Nos. 349, 320 (1982). In addition, the applicability of section 552.103(a) ends once the litigation has been concluded. Attorney General Opinion MW-575 (1982); Open Records Decision No. 350 (1982).

In reaching our conclusion here, we assume that the "representative sample" of records submitted to this office is truly representative of the requested records as a whole. *See* Open Records Decision Nos. 499, 497 (1988) (where requested documents are numerous and repetitive, governmental body should submit representative sample; but if each record contains substantially different information, all must be submitted). This open records letter does not reach, and therefore does not authorize the withholding of any other requested records to the extent that those records contain substantially different types of information than that submitted to this office.

We are resolving this matter with this informal letter ruling rather than with a published open records decision. This ruling is limited to the particular records at issue under the facts presented to us in this request and may not be relied upon as a previous determination under section 552.301 regarding any other records. If you have questions about this ruling, please contact our office.

Yours very truly,



Kay H. Guajardo
Assistant Attorney General
Open Government Section

KHG/rho

Ref.: ID# 31016

Enclosures: Submitted documents

cc: Mr. Paul K. Stockman
Kirkpatrick & Lockhart
1500 Oliver Building
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15222-2312
(w/o enclosures)